

Our appointment system

We are operating a Total Triage system using [Accurx](#) .

How to request an appointment

To request an appointment, please complete a simple online form.

(<https://florey.accurx.com/p/E81048>) An experienced GP will review this, and, in some cases, they may ask for more information or request that you send a photo. They will then either offer you an appointment within an appropriate timeframe, or signposting information. We understand that a small number of people will not be able to complete these forms. If this is the case, one of our reception team can complete the form for you. Phoning the practice or attending reception in person will not give you priority for an appointment, so please use the online form if you can.

Frequently Asked Questions

1. Why is the appointment system changing to total triage?

Our aims are as follows:

- The system must be safe for patients.
- The system should be fair and equitable. This means those who have the greatest need are prioritised.
- We do not want our patients to experience long telephone waits and uncertainty for appointments, as well as long queues at reception.
- Patients should be able to have their needs met by the most appropriately skilled professional.

The 2023/24 GP Contract states “Patients should be offered an assessment of need, or signposted to an appropriate service, at first contact with the practice.” We have a finite number of appointments that can be safely delivered by a finite number of doctors each day. The number of requests for appointments is higher than that actual number we have available. This is the case for GP Practices across the country. The only way to ensure that the people with the greatest need are given these appointments, is for a GP to screen (or triage) each request.

This link gives information about some of the reasons for the increasing pressure on General Practice: <https://www.bma.org.uk/advice-and-support/nhs-delivery-and-workforce/pressures/pressures-in-general-practice-data-analysis>

2. Can someone fill in the triage form on behalf of the patient?

Yes, the form can be completed by someone else, such as a family member or carer. We will respond to the patient only, unless they have given us explicit consent to contact someone else.

3. What does signposting mean?

Signposting is when we give you information about how to access other support instead of an appointment with us. Many services offer a self-referral system so you can access them directly. Examples are Minor Injury unit, emergency department, drug & alcohol service, sexual health clinic, local support groups and charities, social care, community pharmacy, the Acute Urgent Eye Service etc. This also includes links to online resources to support self-care when appropriate.

2. If I am offered an appointment, will it always be with a GP?

We will book you with the most suitable professional. Often this is a doctor, but sometimes it may be more appropriate to consult someone else in our team, e.g. a practice nurse, healthcare assistant, First Contact Physiotherapist, Social prescribing link worker, Clinical Pharmacist, or pharmacy technician. We will always make it clear who your appointment is with. Sometimes we may suggest arranging a test, e.g. blood test, first.

4. What if I do not agree with the triage decision?

The decision is made by an experienced GP. Our priority must always be patient safety, ensuring those with the greatest need get an appointment the soonest. This inevitably means less convenience for some patients some of the time. Please include any essential information on the triage form. Please use the system honestly and fairly, and if your condition worsens, let us know so we can advise on the next step.

4. Does this affect hospital appointments?

No, this change is for Bute House Medical Centre. We do not have any control over the waiting times for hospital appointments.

5. Can I choose which GP I see?

We agree that it is preferable to see the same doctor, particularly when following up a condition you have already consulted them about. Where possible, we will try to accommodate this. Sometimes this will mean waiting longer, but we will not suggest a longer wait unless it is safe. If that doctor is not available within a clinically suitable time, the triaging GP will advise that you consult any doctor in our team, who will have full access to your medical records.